Securitization of Communicable Diseases: Studying threat-construction and the Covid-19 pandemic

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MS Peace and Conflict Studies

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<u>Thesis Acceptance Certificate</u>

It is certified that the contents and form of the MS thesis titled "Securitization of Communicable Diseases: Studying Threat Construction and the Covid-19 Pandemic" written by Ms. Rabeea Jabbar (Registration No. 00000320327) of Centre for International Peace and Stability has been vetted by the undersigned, found complete in all respects as per NUST status/regulations, is free of plagiarism, errors and mistakes and is accepted as partial fulfillment for the award of MS/MPhil Degree. It is further certified that the necessary amendments as pointed out by the GEC members of the scholars have also been incorporated in the said thesis and have been found satisfactory for the requirement of the degree.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my mother- thank you for your endless love, support, and encouragement.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, praises and thanks to God, the Almighty, this thesis has been completed by whose grace and help.

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Abstract

SARS Covid-19, a new coronavirus, is causing chaos all over the world. Politicians and media outlets appear to frequently employ war metaphors to illustrate the challenges posed by the outbreak. The Covid-19 pandemic is not a traditional security threat that portrays itself in the form of aggression from other states and their armed forces; instead, it is a non-traditional security concern that has been constructed as a security threat using the related language. This research aims to explain how Covid-19 has become securitized and by whom. We endeavor to analyze how the expansion of the concept of threat was emphasized through a complex set of frames and the use of 'security language' by leaders worldwide. Aligned with the objectives of this study, a qualitative explanatory research approach has been adopted. Therefore, this study employs Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis Model as it is a qualitative, interpretative, and constructive approach and goes well with the research topic. With regards, this study argues that the UNSC has securitized the Covid-19 pandemic, and all the conditions for a successful securitization have been met. The identified actors evidently employed a security rhetoric while discussing the pandemic and challenges surrounding it. It further demonstrates that unlike the securitization of Ebola and HIV/AIDS by the UNSC, the securitization of Covid-19 is based in the human security domain.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Security as a subject and practice has grown significantly in recent years (Kamradt-Scott & Mcinnes, 2012). The 'Widening and Deepening' debate has been a defining feature of post-Cold War security (Buzan & Hansen, 2009), since it advocates for the securitization of issues that fall beyond the traditional characterization of security, and argues for the inclusion of non-traditional security issues such as environmental problems (Biswas, 2011), energy (Özcam, 2013), health (Pavone, 2017; Ventura, 2016), and migration, etc. (Chami, Brown & Roy, 2020). Unlike tangible traditional security threats that manifest themselves in the form of military aggression from a foreign state or through the proliferation of violence within the territorial boundaries of a country, these non-traditional security risks are global in their nature. Furthermore, due to greater globalization, they emerge at terse notice and are spread at a quick pace. Within this revised conceptual framework of security, infectious diseases, particularly pandemics like HIV/AIDS and Influenza, gained much attention since they pose a significant challenge to the individual, national, and international security (Waterson & Kamradt-Scott 2016). The international community is gaining momentum in its efforts to improve collaboration in the face of Covid-19 outbreak. It is an excellent opportunity for examining existing approaches along with the health emergencies' management policies that address health and human security problems at all levels, from local to regional to international. This assessment would cover not only measures to battle infectious disease risks but also the broader question of how nations respond to a variety of other emerging non-traditional security challenges.

1.1. Background: An overview of the Covid-19 breakout

Since its earliest detection in the Chinese Province of Hubei in late December 2019, this novel coronavirus has spread to almost every country around the world, infecting some 60,534,526 and claiming the lives of more than 1,426,101, as of November 28, 2020 (WHO, 2020). Although the immediate effect of any pandemic is illness or death, one cannot deny the complex natured political, communal, and economic implications of such events. The Covid-19 outbreak, too, proved to be a unique humanitarian and public health crisis (e.g., see Topcuoglu 2020; Dong & Bouey 2020) as it did not confine itself as a mere health emergency or crisis but has also impacted socio-economic, political, and security aspects (McKibbin & Fernando 2020; Bricknell 2020). Only a month into the outbreak, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Covid-19 'A Public Health Emergency of International

Concern (PHEIC) on January 30th, 2020. Just a month and a half later, on March 11, the outbreak was declared as a 'pandemic' (WHO, 2020). UNSC held its first meeting regarding Covid-19 on April 9, 2020, in which U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pronounced the pandemic as the organization's greatest challenge since its foundation in 1945 (Gupta, 2020).

He warned the UNSC members that the pandemic has created a grave threat for the world peace and security (Nichols, 2020). Given the critical Covid-19 situation, the United Nations Security Council, adopted the first Covid-19-related Resolution 2532 (2020) on July 1, 2020, after a three-month negotiation process. In order to combat the disease outbreak, the resolution called for a global cease-fire, a humanitarian pause, and increased national, regional, and international cooperation and solidarity (UNSC, 2020).

Politicians along with the media outlets appear to frequently employ war metaphors to illustrate the problems posed by the coronavirus pandemic. A reference to Winston Churchill's Second World War remark, the Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte termed it "the darkest hour" of Italy. Donald Trump has also characterized himself as a "wartime president" against an invisible adversary. At the virtual G20 session on the crisis, UNSG accepted the comparison: "We are at war with a virus… and not winning it…. This war needs a war-time plan to fight it." The utilization of these metaphors by state leaders clearly shows them 'speaking security.' The Covid-19 pandemic is not a traditional security threat that portrays itself in the form of aggression from other states and their armed forces; instead, it is a non-traditional security issue that has been constructed as a security concern through the use of relevant language.

The designation of Covid-19 as a "threat" to international peace and stability marked an essential step in the international response against the virus. It raised the political status of the disease and allowed for the establishment of extraordinary measures to control it. It indicated a 'securitizing move' in an ongoing securitization process (Buzan, Wæver & Wilde, 1998). The 'theory of securitization' presented by Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, and De Wilde in their book "Security: A New Framework for Analysis" is considered as an important contribution to the field of security studies in the recent past as it explains and analyzes the social practices by which political actors construct security threats (Elbe, 2006). The proponents of the Copenhagen School argue that securitization occurs when the political elites construct security threats instead of objectively identifying them as a threat. They argue that an issue is labeled a security concern using the related language politically to persuade an audience for the approval of extraordinary measures while dealing with the identified security concern

(Buzan, Wæver & Wilde, 1998). Buzan and his colleagues also give a fair warning that the rules are often broken in the name of security during a securitization process, i.e.by disregarding fundamental human rights, for instance, freedom of movement, the right of peaceful assembly, etc.

1.2. Literature Review

Several articles were read and analyzed to conduct a literature review, and three key themes were generated as the framework for the study. Since this study deals with the intersection between security and health, the following sections provide a brief summary of the human security approach, securitization theory, and the security-health nexus. This part, therefore, will provide for the conceptual grounding of the subsequent analysis of the phenomenon of securitization.

1.1.1. A new paradigm of security: from traditional to human

Traditionally states were considered as the sole referent object of security. Security studies were primarily focused on using the military to ensure the state's territorial sovereignty (Hama, 2017; MacCallion, 2016). Nevertheless, in the last two to three decades, it has been realized by both scholars and policymakers that securing the territorial integrity of a nation-state does not ensure the security of citizens of that state (Yadav, 2013). Despite spending enormous funds to increase military capabilities, the number of deaths due to direct/indirect military conflict has not declined. Furthermore, secured borders of a state from any external aggression does not mean that the people within those states are safe from crime happening inside that state or have enough food, education, healthcare, and other fundamental human rights. The cases of Rwanda and North Korea were particularly significant in this regard (King & Murray, 2001; Tanaka, 2018). Therefore, in the post- cold war era, many new schools of thought challenged this traditional security approach. The Human security approach, along with the Copenhagen School, is the most notable among them. The notion of human security highlighted that security and the relevant studies should not solely focus on military threats. The non-traditional security threats, such as ecological degradation, floods, droughts, epidemics, earthquakes, etc., must also be considered (McNamara, 1968; Barnett & Adger, 2007; Hama, 2017; Shiroishi, Uchiyama & Suzuki, 2018). As a result, the Human Security approach gained significant relevance and acceptance in both policy and academic circles.

Despite the contestation and debates among scholars in interpreting the meaning of the term of human security, they all agree that this phrase has changed the security paradigm away from state-centered security and toward human or individual-centered security (e.g., see Hailu, 2016; Indriastuti, 2019). Human security scholars often claim that non-traditional security threats, for instance, hunger, poverty, migration, infectious diseases, and ecological degradation, cause far more damage than war, terrorism, and massacres, all combined. Thus they have severe implications for both individual and global security (Swain, 2013; Muguruza, 2017). The United Nations Human Development Report of 1994, written by Mahbub ul Haq, is the first thing that springs to mind when the idea of "human security" is addressed. The human security notion offered in the report was an attempt to bridge the gap between the concepts of 'freedom from fear,' i.e., from violence, and 'freedom from desire,' i.e., from hunger and poverty (Alkire, 2003). The 1994 UNDP report defined human security as: *"safety from chronic threats as hunger, disease, and repression" and "protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life, whether in homes, in jobs or in communities."* (Human Development Report, 1994, p. 23). Since then, plenty of literature has been written on human security worldwide, and different scholars have tried to define human security in their ways. King and Murray try to limit the scope of human security and believe that it is the "expectation of a life without experiencing the state of generalized poverty" (King & Murray, 2001, p. 592). Thomas notes that inequality has increased dramatically due to globalization, and there are not sufficient measures taken on the International level to address this issue. So for him, human security "describes a condition of existence in which basic material needs are met and in which human dignity, including meaningful participation in the life of the community, can be met" (Thomas, 2001, p. 161).

Despite all the literature that has been written on human security, one cannot find a universally accepted definition of it. In trying to encompass everything into the definition of human security, it might end up meaning nothing. This also makes it difficult for academics and policymakers to integrate 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear' under the more extensive umbrella of human security. Edward Newman has proposed four distinct typologies for categorizing human security concerns. The fourth type focuses mainly on non-traditional security and uncivil society problems such as pandemics, cyberwarfare, human trafficking, etc. He has termed it as 'new security (Newman, 2001, p. 245). In sum, we have witnessed the 'securitization' of issues that lie outside the traditional understanding of security, to include

non-traditional security issues particularly environment, energy, health, food and immigration, etc. (Shahar & Jones, 2012; Floyd, 2007)

1.1.2. Copenhagen School's theory of Securitization

Therefore, the field of security studies in the post-Cold War era was marked by an intense debate between traditionalists and broadening-deepening advocates (Buzan & Hansen, 2010; Herta, 2017). The field was challenged to widen its horizon to include threats outside the traditional understanding of security and to deepen its agenda to encompass the security problems of other actors such as individuals and sub-state groups. These issues are usually dealt with under the concept of human security (Williams, 2003; Floyd, 2007). These academic debates were the driving force behind the birth of Copenhagen School. Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, who have become known as most notable authors from the 'Copenhagen School,' have defined security studies as a 'semantic field' in which actors seek to label a problem as a security threat politicize it. The 'theory of securitization' presented by Ole Wæver, Barry Buzan, and De Wilde in their book "Security: A New Framework for Analysis," is considered a critical contribution to the discipline of security in the recent past as it explains and analyzes the social practices by which political actors construct security issues. The process of securitization follows a specific rhetorical structure, having its roots in war and its historical connotations such as threat, defense, urgency, and survival (Laustsen & Wæver, 2000; Elbe, 2006).

Copenhagen School's securitization theory consists of a trilogy, i.e., a *speech act* also known as the *securitizing move*, the *securitizing actor* who makes the speech act, and an *audience* who accepts or rejects the move (Buzan, Wæver & Wilde, 1998; Kamradt-Scott & McInnes, 2012). The speech act must be fulfilling three rhetoric criteria. It is a complex process in which an actor: a) claims that there is an existential threat to a referent subject, b) asks for the right to take extreme measures in order to manage the situation, and then c) justifies the use of such rule-breaking behavior to an audience (Sears, 2020). Thus, it can be said that the securitization theory does not regard security as an absolute reality, but rather as a byproduct of the aforementioned social process. This social construction of security allows the Copenhagen School to advocate for the expansion of security agenda while arguing for its limitation by drawing a firm line between 'security and other terms like 'harm' or 'danger' (Williams, 2003). This distinction puts the limit on the theoretically unlimited nature of security. Buzan and Wæver (1998) further highlight the conditions to make a speech act

successful. The procedure should be invoked only when the circumstances are appropriate and the issue to be dealt with is one of an existential threat.

Despite being very successful in Europe, securitization earned much criticism, specifically regarding its state-centric approach that is only a little different from the mainstream security approach of realism. Also, the theory has been criticized for assuming a realist meaning of security as 'survival.' What is worth noting here is that securitization theory is often referred to as a type of theory that Robert Cox calls 'Problem Solving Theory.' While addressing these criticisms on Securitization theory, Taurek (2006) highlights it in her paper that securitization theory only enables a researcher to trace the processes of securitization and de-securitization happening around. The theory provides the analyst with a theoretical tool that makes it easier for them to trace the incidences of securitization. It does not enable a researcher to define/modify the term of security.

1.1.3. Linking Health with Security: Health-Security Nexus

The idea of linking security with a health crisis is not new (Wishnick, 2010; Sjöstedt, 2010). The safety of individuals is integral to the safety of a state. If the citizens of a state are not secured from a threat, be it traditional in nature like an inter-state war or non-traditional like floods, terrorism, earthquakes, pandemics, etc., the state is not secure. The 1994 UNDP report and the Commission on Human Security Report of 2003, recognized health security issues from infectious diseases, biological, nuclear, or chemical weapons, one of the primary non-traditional security concerns. In the post-cold war era, the International community realized that human security and health are mutually interdependent. Lisk and colleagues (2015) define health security as the unnecessary loss of life that might have been prevented if health care had been provided on time.

In the context of public health, health security may be described as an emergency-focused strategy aimed at addressing critical public health threats that jeopardize the collective health of a community or communities, such as epidemics, endemics, pandemics, and food-borne illnesses, and environmental disasters. Fidler (2003) believes that health security emerges at the intersection between national security and public health. This implies that the government plays a primary role in protecting its citizens from health threats.

The field of public health has been re-shaped due to some contemporary health concerns. The proliferation of chemical and biological weapons, the potential for their usage

in bio-terrorist activities, and the emergence of new and re-emergence of some old infections are the reasons for this increased focus on public health. In terms of the link between health and security, the health literature in the post-cold war era has undergone two significant changes. First, poor mortality and morbidity rates are increasingly acknowledged as the factors that might lead to a state's collapse. Two: in unstable and conflict-prone regions, health interventions are now considered variables with the potential to function as tools for fostering stability (Gordon, 2011). In the Security Studies, the literature on health as a security problem has grown in prominence. Linking these two terms has gained support from the public health and security scholars. Framing health concerns as security issues does not only allow the mobilization of political support and fiscal resources to address problems of the neglected health sector, but it also legalizes, to some extent, the role of national militaries in responding to health crises, as infectious diseases have always been (Enemrak, 2009; Watterson & Kamradt-Schott, 2015)

However, as expected, this link has not been welcomed by everyone in these two fields though. The health professionals have argued that the interests of powerful elites, both on a national and global level, are reflected in the securitization of health emergencies. While seeking to protect themselves from the health insecurity of 'the rest,' these elites have allowed the new forms of authority that are undesirable for the general public (Watterson & Kamradt-Schott, 2015; Feldbaum et al., 2006). Similarly, the link has been criticized by the security sector personnel as well, as health interventions are not part of the core business of the military of any state (Watterson & Kamradt-Schott, 2015). Colonel Dunlap has argued against these attempts of the government to transform the army into an "all-purpose governmental problem solver." He regards these interventions as "military operations other than war (MOOTW)," hence pointing out the incompatibility of the two areas (C. Dunlap, 1994). Bernard calls the relationship between Public Health and National Security "uncomfortable bed fellows" and criticizes the human security approach of including health concerns in security issues as vague and too comprehensive (Bernard, 2013).

1.3. Research Questions

This study investigates the prevalence and patterns of securitization of the identified discourse concerning the current Covid-19 pandemic. A collection of research questions is posed to organize and arrange the investigation of the study to address the concerns linked to the objective as described above. The following are the questions:

1. As a public health issue, how can an infectious illness evolve into a security concern?
2. To what degree did the stakeholders involved in propagating reaction at the UNSC conference regarding Covid-19 adopt a language of security and security-related metaphors?

Investigating the discourses applied by the authoritative actors while referring to the outbreak will make it easier to explain when and how the disease became securitized.

3. What are the distinguishing aspects of this threat-construction, and who is the referent object, assuming a security grammar can be found in the discourse?

Covid-19 will be assessed in terms of "conventional security terms" or the "human security domain" based on the threat's nature and the referent object. It is essential to understand the defining features of the threat construction as they determine the features of the response to the outbreak.

1.4.   Research Objectives

As stated in the introductory section:

1. This study investigates the phenomena of the evolution of infectious disease into an international security concern.
2. The purpose of this research is to assess the extent to which Covid-19 has been securitized. It investigates the processes that contributed to the global response to the outbreak to see whether such a process can be discovered.
3. This research attempts to define the distinguishing aspects of this threat construction, assuming a security grammar can be found in the discourse.

1.5.   Research Assumption

Stemming from the theory of securitization, we believe that the moment United Nations declared the Covid-19 a 'pandemic' and identified it as a threat to international peace and security marks a significant point for accentuation the use of securitizing discourses all over the world. The speeches made at the first of the United Nations Security Council UNSC summit on the 'pandemics and security' after the adoption of Resolution 2532 are reflective of an ongoing securitization process.

1.6. Problem Statement

This research aims to explain how Covid-19 has become securitized and by whom. We endeavor to analyze how the expansion of the concept of threat was emphasized through a complex set of frames and the use of 'security language' by leaders worldwide. Furthermore, this study aims to shed light on essential concerns as to why and how certain health matters reach the political agenda and even become securitized while others do not.

1.7. Research Methodology

Aligned with the objectives of this study, a qualitative explanatory research approach has been adopted. With the help of the case study approach, light is shed on the exploitation of communicable diseases through their securitization. The field of peace and conflict studies is becoming more interested in studying the connections between language, discourse, and power. Discourse analysis is an important and frequently employed method It includes methodically studying texts for evidence of the meaning created by discourses and investigating how that meaning is transformed into social reality. Thus, discourse analysis is a qualitative, interpretative, and constructive approach for evaluating social phenomena. It is a realistic option for this research since it complements both the research methodology and the research topic. The studied material comprises speeches delivered in front of the same audience, the permanent and non-permanent members of the UNSC. The material for the data includes the UNSCR 2532 unanimously adopted on July 1, 2020, and the speeches made by the representatives of all member states following the day the resolution was adopted. The majority of these speeches have been transcribed and are available online. However, the official text for certain speeches was unavailable. As a result, they had to be transcribed from a video source on UN Web TV.

The speech acts made at the UNSC session with the agenda titled "Maintenance of international peace and security: Implications of COVID-19" are analyzed. The discourses employed by the speakers in front of the UN concerning the linguistic construction of the securitizing discourses and their social contextualization. The grammar of security is identified at three distinct levels; the UN/global level, the influential donor countries, and the worst affected countries. Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, are the two identified global level actors. The speeches of delegates from the United States, the United Kingdom, the People's Republic of China, and Germany were taken into account at the level of influential

donor nations. Finally, on the level of the worst-affected nations, the remarks of Iran's and Italy's delegates were considered to be study material.

There are various techniques to discourse analysis, some of which are similar in some ways but differ in others. Furthermore, the particular techniques employed for analyzing discourse in the text are not explicitly stated in many social science papers that draw on discourse analysis. A detailed description of the analytical approaches utilized to improve internal validity is provided below to encourage transparency and make this study relatively replicable. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is heavily employed in this study to meet the framework for analysis of securitization theory. Secondly, Fairclough's method makes a systematic textual analysis possible by combining linguistics with sociology's interpretive approach. Fairclough suggests that a researcher should look at two dimensions: the communicative event, which may be referred to as a speech act within the securitization theory, and the order of discourse. Therefore, while analyzing the speech act, the structure to which it is related must be considered as a backdrop. The emphasis will be on the securitizing discourses and other present discourses to examine how they inform each other.

Although this research does not intend to undertake a qualitative content analysis, some themes and codes were identified when initially engaging with the material. Risk, threat, emergency, urgency, and responsibility are all terms that are seen to be indications of more important things (McInnes & Rushton, 2011). Fairclough suggests analyzing the material concerning interactional control, i.e., the connection between speakers and metaphors when it comes to the actual analysis. Moreover, an extensive literature review has been conducted to compare and corroborate the evidence of securitization with the knowledge present in the existing literature and to comprehend the phenomenon within its broader context, and to stretch out some general tendencies in terms of narratives associated with infectious diseases outbreaks in the past.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Considerations for the Study

This study takes an interdisciplinary approach, employing the securitization theory as a lens to examine how it influenced the international response to the Covid-19 outbreak. As evidenced by U.N. Security Council Resolution 2532, the disease outbreak is the primary threat in International policy circles. The Securitization theory of the Copenhagen School is discussed in this chapter as a framework for comprehending and analyzing the discourses surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the theoretical model is critically evaluated, and its shortcomings concerning the study of Covid-19 securitization are highlighted.

2.1. The evolution of the security

With the development of nuclear relations between superpowers in the mid-1980s, the 'widening-deepening' debate around the concept of security began. The debate actually stemmed from the discontent of the extreme narrowing of the field of security due to nuclear obsession during the cold war (Buzan & Hansen, 2009). According to deepeners and wideners, the peaceful conclusion of cold war, the failure of the 1990s to produce a significant military event or any great power clash, increasing occurrence of intra-state wars, climate change and its resultant environmental decay, and rapid growth of epidemics such as HIV/AIDS, proved that traditional security paradigm was incapable of meeting the challenges of post-cold war world. The forces working to shift the military-state paradigm were not new, but they were no longer labeled "peace researchers"; instead, they were integrated into mainstream Security Studies and International Relations (Charrett, 2009). As the concepts such as human security, societal security, economic security, food security, and others were introduced, the International Security Studies (ISS) evolved. The ISS has grown into multiple diverse yet interconnected literary flows. Critical security studies, constructivist security studies, human security, the Copenhagen school, and feminist security studies have emerged alongside more traditionalist, military-centric Defense and Strategic Studies, and Peace and Conflict Studies (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

2.2. Critical Security Studies and Post-structuralism

During the cold war, poststructuralism was already one of the leading approaches. The state-centric approaches of strategic studies were harshly criticized by poststructuralism. Although proponents of poststructuralism have been involved in peace and security debates since the 1970s, it did not enter security studies until the mid-1980s (Hansen, 2016). Several

factors influenced this entry. First, poststructuralism's concern with power and structures seemed to correspond well with key elements of classical realist security studies. Second, like critical peace researchers in the 1970s, poststructuralists believed Western military, economic, and political security was exploiting the Third World. Security remained a major theme with which the poststructuralists battled in the cold war era. As a result, distinguishing poststructuralism from its contributions to security studies can be challenging (McMorrow, 2018).

Unlike other I.R. theories, poststructuralism does not regard itself as a 'theory' or a 'school of thought' as its founding philosophers did not work together to produce a coherent school of thought. There is no single account of the subject matter of poststructuralism; rather, it refers to a set of ideas and concepts drawn from the infamous 1960s French Social Theory. Foucault, Derrida, Cixous, Irigaray, and Guattari are among the most significant poststructuralist thinkers. The writings of these key authors have been studied, classified, and grouped together to shape poststructuralism reception. Since poststructuralism was the direct descendant of structuralism, many of its significant features were naturally inspired by the tenets of structuralism. Structuralism, established through Ferdinand de Saussure's Course in General Linguistics, was popular among intellectual circles in Paris in the 1960s and was regarded as the Avant-Garde ideal of that era. Post-structuralism was also heavily influenced by Saussure's writings. Both structuralism and poststructuralism focus on the words and language, not only on 'spoken' or 'written' words but also on the 'gaps' between our thoughts and reality. They believe that language cannot provide absolute truth because words do not have universal meanings and can be infinitely subjective. Poststructuralists argue that because language is not a transparent medium, objective truth is inaccessible and non-existent (Rustenhoven, 2018).

Thanks to the works of Der Derian, Ashley, Shapiro, and Walker, poststructuralism found its way into IR and Security Studies. Since the linguistic discovery of Saussure, scholars have extensively studied the discourse. Under the leadership of Campbell and Neumann, Discourse Analysis firmly established itself in I.R. in the 1990s. As the cold war ended and rationalist theories failed to predict the dissolution of the international system's bipolarity, the emphasis on discourse increased. Since then, the application of poststructuralist thought to security has proven to be of infinite utility. Poststructuralism has made significant contributions to the field of social sciences and its research (Hansen, 2016).

Most poststructuralist writings are primarily based on their critique of traditional rationalist theories such as realism and liberalism and their role in opposing peace research. Poststructuralists have explored the relationship between security and the construction of national identity. They believe that security policies should be evaluated as one of the essential practices through which states develop their identities, rather than simply viewing them as defense strategies. Traditional realist approaches to security do not investigate national identity, i.e., what it is and how it came to be. However, poststructuralists such as Campbell maintain that naming is a part of a representational exercise invested with strategies and strategies of power. According to this viewpoint, security is essential for the state, but not in the traditional sense that a state must be protected from external threats. Campbell turns the traditional understanding of security on its head, arguing that its state of insecurity and threats forms a state's identity. Threats and insecurity define the state: only the knows who and what it is by contrast with the radical, threatening *Other*. The realist conception of the state as an ahistorical and uniform identity is thus replaced by investigations and deconstructions of its various historical forms of representation. According to poststructuralists, security should be regarded as a discursive practice rather than a direct portrayal of an objectively threatening reality. They assert that it is a discursive and a political practice (Hansen, 2016; Rustenhoven, 2018).

2.3. Speech Act Theory

The Theory of Speech Act, developed by the philosopher J.L. Austin and his student J.R. Searle in the late 1930s, forms an integral part of the discipline of linguistics. The theory systematically correlates the speaker's intentions to their linguistic activity to examine the function of speaking and utterances in speaker and hearer behaviors. Austin distinguishes between two types of utterances: *constative utterances* and *performative utterances*. The first one depicts the belief that all statements aim to state specific facts, whereas the latter is performing an action under certain conditions.

Performative utterances do not intend to describe or report on any situation. Austin believes that issuing an utterance is the execution of an action, and it should not be seen only as 'saying something.' (Austin, 1962; Hidayat, 2016) 'I promise to take you out to lunch after I finish my assignment' is an example of such utterances. Several 'felicity conditions' must be satisfied for the performative utterances to function properly. One such condition includes following an established conventional procedure that produces a particular conventional outcome. The procedure must include the usage of some specific vocabulary by some specific

persons under specific conditions. Furthermore, the words, people, and situation must be appropriate to invoke the procedure (Austin, 1962, p. 14-15):

1. All participants must carry out the procedure correctly and completely.
2. Since the procedure is intended to be used by people experiencing specific thoughts or feelings, those people must be experiencing those thoughts or feelings to invoke the procedure. The participant must also intend to act per those thoughts or feelings.

A speech act consists of three levels of acts, i.e., locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. A locutionary act can be defined as 'saying something' focusing on the utterance's apparent superficial meaning. In contrast to locutionary acts, illocutionary acts occur when something is said that represents the true meaning of an utterance. A performative act of speech is a type of illocutionary act. The third type of act is the perlocutionary act, which attempts to generate inevitable consequential effects on hearers' ideas, feelings, or behaviors by saying anything. Jürgen Habermas (1984, p. 288) distinguishes between the three acts by these catchphrases: "to say something, to act in saying something, to bring about something through acting in saying something."

Taking the example mentioned above, we can identify these three levels of speech act. She said to me, "I promise to take you out to lunch after I finish my assignment."- locution; she promised to take me out for lunch after finishing her assignment - illocution; and she assured to take me out for lunch after completing her assignment. Therefore, attention should be paid to both spoken/written words and the 'slippage' between the speaker's thoughts and the real world. Direct or indirect speech acts are both possible. Direct speech act occurs when the meaning of the utterance matches the meaning of the speaker. On the other hand, the indirect speech act lacks this apparent link between the speaker's and the utterance's meanings (Austin, 1962).

2.4. The Copenhagen School's Theory of Securitization

The Copenhagen School, which is commonly linked with the Securitization Theory, provides the theoretical foundation for this study. The school has focused on how intersubjective processes provide meaning to security and (to a lesser degree) the political repercussions of these security constructs (McDonald, 2008:68). Ole Wæver of Copenhagen's Centre for Peace and Conflict Research coined as well as defined the idea in 1993. It was further expanded upon in his later publications and the Copenhagen School's primary text

"Security: A Framework for Analysis." Buzan and Wilde co-authored the book with Wæver. The book is one of the most prominent contributions in recent years to security studies, explaining and analyzing the social processes by which political actors construct security risks. Barry Buzan and Wæver believe that security studies are a 'semantic field' in which political elites try to politicize a problem by labeling it a security threat. Buzan considers security a form of politics characterized by existential threats requiring emergency action in a specific sector.

As mentioned earlier, the discipline of security studies was characterized by an active debate between traditionalists and widening-deepening supporters (Buzan & Hansen, 2010; Herta, 2017). The field was challenged to extend its horizon to encompass threats beyond the conventional security concept and incorporate the security issues of other actors. These academic debates were the impetus for the establishment of the Copenhagen School. While seeking to address the need for security reevaluation within security studies, securitization theory was presented. Since then, this conceptual framework has been used in various case studies in a variety of settings. The Copenhagen School has established security as an illocutionary speech act. Securitization theory aims to identify how issues are handled differently at the international and national levels when framed as existential threats.

On the other hand, this theory does not seek to assess whether or not an issue has been securitized; instead, it only comes into the picture after it has been securitized and uses conceptual tools to investigate the political repercussions of securitization processes. Securitization has a distinct rhetorical structure with its roots in war and its historical implications of threat, defense, urgency, and survival (Laustsen & Wæver, 2000; Elbe, 2006). Wæver asserts that an elite state official puts the matter into a specialized domain by 'saying' security. On the other hand, Buzan clarifies that a securitizing act does not require the actor to speak the term "security" explicitly and that mentioning "security" does not automatically imply a security danger.

According to Buzan and colleagues, security pushes politics outside the standard norms of the game and portrays situations as extraordinary. They think that security risks do not exist independent of the discourse when they adopt the constructivist basis of comprehending security. Buzan and colleagues believe that security critics, at least as far back as Arnold Wolfers, saw security in two ways: objectively (a real threat exists) and subjectively (an individual or a group perceives a threat). Nothing, according to Buzan, guarantees that these

two approaches will align. He argues that this distinction is critical in establishing a framework for multi-sectoral international security.

Buzan claims that securitization, like politicization, is essentially an intersubjective process, implying that its efficacy relies on audience consent. Even if a more objectivist approach is desired, Buzan believes it is impractical unless the threat is evident and immediate. Because we do not have a scale to judge the threat's "realness," it is impossible to analyze an issue's securitization. This would require an objective measure of security, which no theory has ever given. Even if the measuring problem is overcome, the objectivist approach is unlikely to be particularly effective. Threats are defined differently in different states. Whether an analyst determines that an actor's preference for a high or low threshold leads to correct judgments, the preference has real-world implications. The degree to which one actor's securitization processes match with other actors' perceptions of what constitutes a severe risk influences how securities interact within the international system. One aspect of understanding behavior is the degree of common intersubjective security understandings inside and between players.

Buzan contends that attempting to define "true security" outside of the realm of politics is not politically nor analytically useful; rather, understanding the processes and dynamics of securitization would be more beneficial. As a result, the contrast between subjective and objective is essential in highlighting the fact that we aim to avoid an objectively provided notion of security and instead emphasize that security is decided by actors and hence subjective. However, the term "subjective" is insufficient. It is not for people to judge whether or not a problem constitutes a security issue. Securitization is socially constructed and intersubjective (Buzan et al., 1998; p 30-31).

Buzan and colleagues emphasize upon the importance of including diverse areas into security studies to transcend beyond the conventional military-political agenda (Buzan et al., 1998). They identify five such sectors, i.e., political, economic, environmental, military, and societal. Due to the differences in the nature of the interactions, it is fair to anticipate finding units and values unique to specific sectors. It is also worth remembering that the nature of survival and threat will vary depending on the industry. Therefore, the concepts of 'sectors' and 'regional security complexes,' which are inextricably connected entities regarding their security processes and dynamics, are significant for this study's broader framework (Buzan et al., 1998).

It is sufficient when the security act is treated as an issue of 'politics of existential threat' and takes precedence over issues of 'normal politics,' allowing for rule-breaking measures and actions. In a nutshell, a discursive process in which a problem is claimed to constitute a security threat to a specific referent object is known as securitization. If a problem is portrayed as an existential threat that requires immediate response, it is securitized and thus prioritized over any other issue. According to constructivism's ontology, this discursive practice is referred to as a 'speech act,' which is described as the act that produces and brings something into existence.

Buzan and colleagues argue that any national matter can end up almost anywhere on the spectrum of politicization provided the appropriate conditions are met:

a) **Non-politicized**- the state does not get involved in these issues and is not included in public policy and debate circles.

b) **Politicized**- the problem becomes a topic of public policy debates, requiring government response such as resource allocation or other forms of communal control.

c) **Securitized**- the problem is being framed as an existential threat that necessitates extraordinary actions lying beyond the scope of regular politics (Buzan et al., 1998).

Speaking security, however, does not imply successful securitization. It is only the first step in the securitization process. Buzan and colleagues discuss three enabling conditions for an effective speech act:

1. The 'internal condition' requires that the securitizing move adheres to security vocabulary to build a narrative containing a real threat, a viable solution, and a point of no return.

2. The 'social condition' necessitates the securitizing actor possessing an authoritative position acknowledged by the public.

3. A general requirement is that the characteristics of the alleged threat be frightening enough to persuade the audience.

The foundation of securitization theory lies upon the trilogy of *speech act*/ securitizing move, *the securitizing actor* performing the speech act, and *an audience* accepting or rejecting the move (Buzan et al., 1998; Kamradt-Scott & McInnes, 2012). In most cases, the securitizing actor is a political elite who seeks to securitize an issue by executing a securitizing move. Depending on the nature of the intended audience, the actor making the move requires both

legal as well as moral support. Because, regardless of obtaining social backing, political officials' credibility may be harmed by severing social connections with people (Buzan et al., 1998). Consequently, the political elite making the move carefully assesses the costs and benefits of taking emergency action before presenting his or her case (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 32). Buzan calls the potentially threatening issue an existential threat. The referent object is any object/ideal endangered by that threat having a valid right of survival. The state was regarded as the referent object conventionally, but with the more inclusive security approach of contemporary times, the securitizing actor can now depict anything as a referent object. Simultaneously, the securitizing actor can be the referent object and might speak for itself via authorized officials (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 42).

Nevertheless, the feat of the securitization move lies in the persuasion of the audience. In order to develop a shared understanding of what has to be done to address the issue, the securitizing actor must persuade the general public to regard the issue as a security threat. Unless such acceptance or comprehension is reached, the item has not been securitized; merely a securitizing action has occurred. When a securitizing actor tries to persuade the audience to adopt emergency methods due to the unique security nature of the problem, the audience can also be a referent object (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 41). The proponents of securitization theory sometimes call the securitizing actor the 'functional actor' since the actor significantly influences security decisions (Buzan et al., 1998; p. 36). Keeping all this aside, still not each issue can be securitized effectively. The linguistics philosophy's 'felicity' standards must be met. The securitization theory necessitates fulfilling three rhetorical requirements for a successful securitization:

a) The actor must affirm that a referent subject is confronted with an existential threat.
b) They then must request that the authorities take exceptional measures to address the issue.
c) The actor then defends the employment of such rule-breaking emergency measures in the following stage (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 25).

Wæver believes that the audience is an essential component of securitization process since it has the power to allow rules to be broken. Therefore, the functional actor must connect with interests, feelings, and the audience's needs to convince them (Buzan et al., 1998, p. 31).

Securitization is a robust political instrument for drawing the government's attention to a problem to prioritize it. It also instills a sense of the importance of threats in the population.

However, the founders of the securitization theory believe security politics to be a failure to deal with the issues as everyday politics. Security is typically linked with secrecy, haste, and "panic politics," and securitization follows the same rationale (Buzan et al., 1998:29,34; McDonald, 2008). Consequently, there is 'normative bias' against the theory (McInnes & Rushton, 2010). Buzan and Wæver think that the securitization process will inevitably end up in "panic politics," regardless of the nature of security (Buzan et al., 1998). The idea of securitization theory has evolved substantially since its debut in the book "Security: A New Framework for Analysis" and has been applied to numerous case studies in various settings. However, there is no one version of securitization theory; rather, several variants in the literature allude to the same notion (Balzacq et al., 2014:8). Balzacq analyzed the critical developments in securitization studies and developed a social theory of securitization. He regards the sociological securitization theory as the ideal type of securitization. His theory will also serve as the reference point and framework for this study. Balzacq (2014: 11) believes that the speech act is an integral part of this type of securitization. The speech act operates through social processes such as propaganda or socialization, and the audience is motivated by knowledge claims about an existential threat to a referent object. In this way, threats are converted into societal reality (Balzacq et al., 2014).

2.5. Critique of Securitization Theory

Despite its enormous popularity over the previous few decades, the securitization hypothesis was bound to attract criticism. According to Robert Cox, theories are meant to have a purpose and serve the interests of someone (Cox, 1981, p. 128). Problem-solving and critical theories are two types of theories that Cox distinguishes. Problem-solving theories start with the world as it is, with all of its social and power relationships and institutions in place. By addressing the origins of the conflict, these ideas help current relationships and institutions function smoothly. The second category includes so-called critical theory.

Contrary to problem-solving theories, the theories in this category analyze pre-existing social and power relations by examining the origins and how and if they may change (Cox, 1981, p. 129). According to this categorization, the securitization theory falls under the former category. Ken Booth believes that securitization theory is a "theoretical mixture of liberal, post-structural and neo-realistic assumptions." He claims that the theory is founded on a confused understanding of security and ignores the reality of security risks outside of its discourse (Booth, 2007).

One of the most common criticisms of the securitization theory is its overly state-centric approach, as it has been chiefly applied to state case studies (McDonald, 2008). However, Wæver argues that it is a natural consequence from the premise that the (security) notion still has something to do with defense and the state at its core (Wæver 1995:47). The concept is frequently criticized for being West-oriented since it offers a politicized issue treated as "normal politics." The normal politics outlined by securitization theory researchers indicate a Western Liberal Democratic State (McDonald, 2008). These critiques, however, may be dismissed for two reasons, given the purpose of the research. First, rather than a single state, the idea will be applied to many players within the international community and global government; second, this research aims not to discover the actual consequences of the policy, whether politicized or securitized.

McDonald also believes that the theory leaves numerous issues unresolved. The theory is silent on whom the securitizing step must persuade. Although the idea of 'audience' is the most critical aspect of securitization, it is least explored in theory. It also does not indicate when a particular issue has been successfully securitized. It does not explain how alternative discourse modalities, such as pictures and videos, fulfill the same goal as a speech act (McDonald, 2008). However, the theoretical framework for this study gives preliminary answers to these unresolved issues for the sole purpose of carrying out this research. In this case, the audience to be persuaded is the international community represented by the United Nations. For the sake of this study, it is believed that covid-19 would be deemed successfully securitized if numerous actors repeat the securitizing discourse in different circumstances and when emergency steps to stop its expansion are implemented. Finally, the study's approach will be confined to the examination of speech acts. All other discourse modes that have the potential to be securitizing moves shall be avoided.

Some well-known critical security theorists, such as Bilgin and Doty, have also offered criticisms relevant to this study. They are skeptical of the proposed automated securitization classification and its underlying security rationale of perceiving it as a negative development. These researchers contend that progressive goals of daily politics may be realized inside rather than outside of the security paradigm (McDonald, 2008). This is an intriguing suggestion, and it will help reduce bias in the study of securitization in the case of Coronavirus disease. Perhaps applying security logic to Covid-19 was the quickest way to achieve progressive goals and take the necessary measures to contain the virus's spread. However, such a detailed evaluation is

outside the scope of this study, but it could be gauged during future research based on its knowledge.

Chapter Three: Securitization of Public Health Issues through the years

Viruses have reappeared on the world agenda, and this time not only as a minor political concern (Herington, 2010). The communicable diseases were first noticed in the International Politics at the International Sanitary Conference convened in Paris in 1851. The nations' delegates met to explore cooperative solutions to cholera and other epidemics that wreaked havoc in the European continent in the first half of the nineteenth century. When it came to managing potentially pandemic microorganisms, the more immediate considerations of preventing future conflicts and the ever-present dread of nuclear weapons gradually took precedence. During World War II, the belief that infectious diseases would eventually be controlled was bolstered with significant medical advances. The U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall demonstrated a similar notion in 1948 when he said that infectious diseases are on the verge of being eliminated from this world (Elbe, 2009; p 2-3).

In the last two to three decades, this confidence, however, has been severely shattered. There was renewed international concern about a slew of potentially lethal "rogue" viruses circulating on the planet (Hanrieder & Kreuder-Sonnen, 2014). These viruses range from relatively new ones like the highly pathogenic Covid-19 virus and the H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza, coronavirus responsible for SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), to the almost globally spread Human Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV) causing AIDS. Other infectious illnesses, such as T.B., malaria, and cholera, have also made a resurgence, wreaking havoc on communities. Suppose we were to add to this mix a number of uncommon but no less alarming microbes such as Ebola, West Nile virus, Hantavirus, and the Nipah virus; in that case, the current global situation can be described; as a 'pandemic of epidemics.' Unease has replaced the naive optimism of the 20th century, which was misguided in thinking that viruses were geographically contained and evolutionary immobile (Elbe, 2009).

Many international organizations, governments, and non-governmental organizations have begun to formulate their response to these infectious diseases in terms of security. By rejecting the decades-old tradition of equating security with the absence of armed conflict between states, they have demonstrated that controlling the spread of infectious diseases is a growing international concern (WHO, 2007). Infectious diseases have begun to be recognized as a national and global security problem by global authorities. In short, infectious illnesses are getting more and more securitized. Over two hundred academics and public health professionals attended an important meeting on emerging viruses hosted by the U.S. National

Institutes of Health and Rockefeller University in 1989, laying the groundwork for this securitization. In 1992, the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine followed in with a report that discussed the emerging infections and how they are causing a threat to the general population's health. The report received widespread attention among the academic and policy circles (Elbe, 2009).

Security as a subject and practice has evolved considerably during the last three decades. Health problems are increasingly being highlighted as one of the numerous non-traditional security issues, and security is no longer restricted to military threats. The nexus between global health and security has garnered a great deal of attention in the literature on global health governance. Biological weapons and bioterrorist assaults, and naturally occurring outbreaks of illnesses have been the subject of attention. The securitization of communicable illnesses is not a new phenomenon, therefore. It has been the accepted practice throughout time (De Bengy Puyvallée & Kittelsen, 2018).

3.1. The Securitization of Pandemic Influenza

Securing pandemics is not a new occurrence, as previously said. Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in the importance of health issues, owing to the growth of scientific facilities and new agricultural and industrial technologies. It is no wonder that non-communicable illnesses like obesity and diabetes are considered severe dangers to the global community after this growth. The disease's characterization as a "security threat" is not a new one. Health professionals, legislators, security specialists, and politicians alike continue to be concerned about the pandemic. Pandemic Influenza is the disease that the WHO calls "the most feared security threat" (Watterson & Kamradt-Scott, 2015). It is estimated that millions of people died due to three influenza pandemics that occurred in 1918, 1957, and 1968. The devastation caused by Influenza was well-documented even before the 1918 pandemic. However, the damage caused by the Spanish Flu of 1918 is undoubtedly one of the most terrible catastrophes in the known human history. It has been recognized as a global public health threat for centuries, however, it was not always viewed as a security threat having severe implications on all the dimensions of the society. It was not considered a security concern during the Cold War when the western security thought process was heavily influenced by the prospects of superpower conflict. Even when the pandemic was securitized, the pandemic's cyclical character was replicated in the periods of de-securitization that followed. The pandemic influenza had been recognized as a public health crisis for many centuries. There had been

numerous efforts to securitize it; however, it was not institutionalized as a security concern by the 1990s.

A decrease in nuclear danger moved the emphasis from traditional security concerns to non-traditional security issues by 1990, with the launch of concepts like Human Security and Securitization theory. Due to this, the emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases (ERIDs) were considered both public health emergencies and security problems by the end of the decade. Securitization necessitates human input as well as a proper context. The proper context is as crucial as the persuasion of an audience by the speech act made by the securitizing actor. The produced frames should be based on empirically valid reality or be in an appropriate setting (Watterson & Kamradt-Scott, 2015; Kamradt-Scott & McInnes, 2012).

Influenza's transformation into a security threat began slowly but accelerated with the H5N1 epidemic in 1997, the SARS outbreak in 2003, and the Ebola outbreak in 2013. The global spread of the H5N1 influenza virus and the SARS outbreak in Southeast Asia created a new scenario for an emergency. The number and variety of actors engaged in securitizing speech acts and their positions of power ensured that the general public widely believed the threat allegations. Securitizing actors included individuals, professional groups, and global institutions. As a whole, the actors extended from notable health and medical practitioners to academics to top government officials and legislators to journalists. According to Andrew Cassels, former WHO Director of Strategy for the Office of Director General, bringing health into the sphere of security was a deliberate plan. It was unavoidable, even if not unanimously agreed by all the member countries. Others, like David Nabarro, the special envoy to the WHO for the Covid-19, feel it has been more about utilizing the appropriate language to communicate successfully with stakeholders than it has been about strategic framing. While reflecting on his own experience, he believes that the best method to dealing with the influenza pandemic would be to use a multi-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary approach (Enemark, 2009; Elbe, 2009).

Studies prove that the increased frequency of speech acts and the wide variety of securitizing actors since 1997 indicates the approval by the general public. In three ways, the success of influenza securitization may be assessed. According to the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC), several countries have created national pandemic preparation strategies. For the protection of their citizens, most economically developed countries have engaged in advance purchase agreements with pharmaceutical corporations. Finally, between 2005 and 2009, several countries across the globe pledged more than four billion dollars to

improve global pandemic preparation and response. This move helped in mobilizing significant resources and prompted extensive planning and preparation. A number of new laws and regulations were passed justifying and codifying a range of emergency measures ranging from social distancing practices to law enforcement and quarantine. The securitization of pandemic influenza has opened a new road for crisis responses outside the regular planning and response domain. It has resulted in subtle but essential changes in current culture and will continue to do so in the future (Watterson & Kamradt-Scott, 2015; Kamradt-Scott & McInnes, 2012). Therefore, it is not just the speech act but also the promotion of structure and cultural support that enables the environment of securitization.

3.2. The Securitization of HIV/AIDS

The UNSCR 1308 was adopted in 2000 to address the ever-spreading pandemic of HIV/AIDS. Before its adoption, a health issue had never been formally framed as a threat to international peace and security. Concerns were highlighted in the resolution regarding the possible negative impact of the pandemic on U.N. peacekeeping personnel. It further stated that, if left uncontrolled, the pandemic might threaten the stability and security of the International order. As a result, the perception that HIV/AIDS poses a security concern has grown widespread. HIV/AIDS advocates in the public health profession applaud the illness's securitization. The perception that HIV/AIDS constitutes a security risk has encouraged governments in developed and developing countries to take the disease more seriously. They have started devoting more resources to curb its growth through preventative programs and increased access to cure and treatment (McInnes & Rushton, 2012).

International Relations and Security Studies have paid close attention to the securitization of HIV/AIDS, notably after the UNSC intervention in 2000. During the last decade, a consensus has evolved on the mechanism that made HIV/AIDS an international security concern. A month-long U.N. Council Presidency focused on Africa brought the UNSC members together in January 2000 to examine the effects of HIV/AIDS on Africa's peace and security situation. According to securitization theory, the disease posed an existential threat to nations, particularly their political stability. The former U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the former UNAID Executive Director Peter Piot underlined the social and economic difficulties created by HIV/AIDS and the threat to political stability. Their remarks constituted a securitizing action and were also viewed so by academics around the world. Their statements

also clearly met all three of Buzan's criteria for effective securitization outlined in his book 'A New Framework for Analysis.'

First and foremost, it adhered to the established security grammar. Second, individuals who made the speech acts were clearly in a position to make security decisions, thanks to their authoritative positions in the UNSC. Thirdly, HIV/AIDS was represented as threatening as it was responsible for causing millions of deaths every year. It was mainly portrayed as an existential threat to countries having a high HIV load (Elbe, 2009; Selgelid & Enemark, 2008).

The intervention of UNSC by the adoption of Resolution 1308 indicated the acceptance of securitizing move by the audience. The three facilitating conditions apparently being met in the first half of the decade were regarded as pivotal for the disease's successful securitization in academic and policy circles. It was hailed as a "major milestone" in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Many academics believed that this securitization provided an opportunity to raise the international profile of the disease to gather more resources. In the years following Resolution 1308, it became clear that HIV/AIDS had risen to the top of the global agenda. It was evidenced by the explicit inclusion of HIV/AIDS in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the establishment of the G8-backed Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria in 2003, and the adoption of the 2nd UNSC Resolution on HIV/AIDS 1983 in 2011. The resolution highlighted that the disease poses a serious threat to society's growth, progress, and stability. There was a broad and robust sense of urgency, as well as a nearly universal recognition of the need for comprehensive and persistent action on an International level (McInnes & Rushton, 2012)

Despite attracting much attention, in reality, the UNSC resolutions were merely one stage in a multi-level securitization process. Several pioneering analysts at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began systematically analyzing the potential impact of the AIDS pandemic on political stability in countries and U.S. foreign policy objectives overseas as early as 1990. In the 1990s, AIDS was referred to be a "time bomb" with catastrophic economic, military, and political consequences. Conversely, it has been argued by some public health practitioners that fear is the driving force behind this resource allocation instead of the desire to get rid of a disease that causes a high mortality rate (Sjöstedt, 2010).

Some scholars such as McInnes and Lee argue that this increased focus on framing certain communicable diseases such as SARS, Ebola, HIV/AIDS, etc., as security issues is

because they tend to move from underdeveloped and developing countries to the developed world. They deem this discrimination among the securitization of the diseases as inappropriate and biased. They argue that if infectious diseases and security are linked in this way, the international health agenda risks being biased in favor of specific populations' interests over others (McInnes & Lee, 2016; McInnes & Roemer-Mahler, 2017).

Much of the studies focus on the threat of HIV/AIDS relating to typical security problems, such as peace, society's capacity to operate and internal stability, and/or the military. Literature shows that the most reliable indicators of the revolution, civil wars, ethnic cleansing, genocide, and other such uprisings in the society are low life expectancy, economic destruction, high infant mortality rate, etc. These are the very same factors that are currently wreaking havoc in sub-Saharan Africa due to HIV/AIDS. Laurie Garrett believes the sociological implications of this pandemic will be comparable to those of the 14th century Black Death epidemic, which had a dramatic influence on Europe's social structure and institutions (Garrett, 1995).

3.3. The Securitization of Ebola

Because it was the first resolution ever approved by the UNSC to deal with an infectious disease, the passage of UNSC Resolution 1308(2000) created a precedent. The U.N. Security Council struggled to develop a plan that would allow for a global response to Ebola. However, in the end, on September 15, 2014, it passed U.N. Security Council Resolution 2176 on the subject, expressing grave concern about the current epidemic of the Ebola virus in certain Western African countries. The resolution classified the EVD outbreak as a security threat by declaring it a threat to international peace and security. It also warned that the outbreak might have endangered the peace-building and development gains of Guinea, Siberia, and Sierra Leone. In addition, it is worth pointing out that the most affected nations were recovering from civil conflicts and undergoing peace consolidation at the time of the disaster. A large part of the resolution was devoted to examining the possible implications of HIV/AIDS on regional and global security settings. UNSC asked UNSG to ensure that the relevant U.N. departments hastened their epidemic response action. Through this resolution, the WHO was also urged to enhance its technical leadership and operational support to countries worldwide (Burci, 2014; Ventura, 2016).

According to the recommendations of Resolution 2177, humanitarian agencies affected by the spread of the virus should be provided with appropriate assistance; the disease should

be prevented from aggravating or spreading further; as well as any potential political, social, economic, and humanitarian ramifications of the disease should be limited, not only locally, but regionally and globally. According to the recommendations of Resolution 2177, humanitarian agencies affected by the spread of the virus should be provided with appropriate assistance. Furthermore, the disease should be prevented from aggravating or spreading further. Any potential political, social, economic, and humanitarian ramifications of the disease should be limited, not only locally, but regionally and globally (Enemark, 2017).

As outlined by the Copenhagen School's Theory, the processes for securitizing Ebola have been thoroughly followed. The UNSC was designated as the securitizing actor responsible for taking exceptional actions if necessary. It was not the intention of the drafters of Resolution 2177 to set a precedent that might have had long-term repercussions on the powers and functions of the UNSC by imposing new duties on the Member States. They simply hoped to create a tighter collaboration among U.N. member states and acquire additional financial resources when faced with an unusual occurrence. A solid argument in favor of this view is that the UNSCR 2177 did not directly target Ebola and its potentially devastating impact on public health. Instead, the resolution alluded to the disease's anticipated harmful repercussions in terms of growing social and political instability in the most affected nations, which were still healing from civil wars (Schröder, 2015; Durocher, 2018).

Social-contextual variables influenced the success of this securitization. However, it was not until people in Global North (Spain and the US) contacted the virus that emergency measures became essential. Two Americans getting infected with Ebola in July 2014 and the first diagnosis on U.S. territory in October were particularly important events that sparked international concern. It also proved that national and regional interests can prompt the language of securitization. The Resolution 2177 (2014) confirmed the belief that there has been a growing trend of securitization of health. The risk of infectious disease spread internationally is no longer viewed as a public health problem to be dealt with by civil authorities. Instead, it is viewed as a security threat to be dealt with primarily by national and international security, military, and intelligence authorities (Durocher, 2018).

3.4. The Securitization of SARS- Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

Regarding disease perception in Asia, the SARS outbreak is often seen as a pivotal moment. Several state and non-state actors began employing security discourse in their

comments when discussing the health emergencies in the wake of this epidemic. With the securitization of SARS, Asian countries realized that their security architecture has to be redesigned in order to deal with contagious illnesses and the necessity for regional collaboration. Many SARS cases were reported in the Chinese province of Guangdong around the end of 2002. An inability on the part of China to adequately address the growing public health crisis coupled with an attempt to de-securitize and hide the issue from the international community led to a problem that quickly spread across borders and threatened the ability of other regional states to carry on with their daily operations as usual (Wishnick, 2010).

Like HIV/AIDS, SARS began to be seen as more than just a health concern and was depicted as a serious danger to political, economic, and foreign policy operations. Additionally, SARS significantly impacted the foreign travel in Asia and costed the world economy more than $60 billion. It was not until March 2003, when the virus began spreading to neighboring Asian countries (Singapore and Hong Kong) and Canada, the United States, and Europe, that World Health Organization issued rare emergency advice that accelerated the process of securitizing the disease. The WHO's use of a security language, as well as a variety of actions such as temporary flight bans from infected areas, halting the issuance of visas to people from these areas, enhancing security measures at airports such as health and temperature checks, and quarantining people from infected countries for ten days, all aided this process (Caballero-Anthony, 2008).

Evidently, SARS was securitized differently in different nations and had very different effects on the crisis's management. Chinese officials attempted to de-securitize the situation, while their counterparts in the West wanted to securitize it in order to speed up and boost reaction efforts. A regional over-securitization of the pandemic caused other states, such as Thailand, to suffer 'by association.' Thailand's tourist and commercial activities were adversely affected by the securitization process, despite the absence of SARS. This shows that the perception of a disease may be just as destructive as the actual disease (Caballero-Anthony, 2008).

Chapter Four: The Securitization of Covid-19: An analysis

This chapter aims to respond to the research questions presented at the start of the study. The study looks at the discourses used by speakers in front of the United Nations in terms of the linguistic production of securitizing discourses and their social context. This chapter has been divided into four major sections. The evolution of Covid-19 from a global health concern into an international security concern has been discussed in the initial section. The following section tries to identify and then critically analyze the grammar of security used at the UNSC session regarding the Covid-19. It also outlines the planned pandemic fighting emergency responses indicated in the identified material. The final section examines the infamous trilogy of securitization proposed by the Copenhagen School and attempts to identify the securitizing actor, securitizing move, and referent object.

4.1. Evolution of Covid-19 from a global health concern into an International security concern

The initial cases of the SARS Covid-19 were reported in late December 2019 in the Hubei province of China. Initially, nobody had anticipated its extensive effects; however, the pneumonia-like infection afterward dispersed to nearly all countries in the world and infected almost twelve million people with a death toll of around 500,000 up to July 12, 2020. After a comprehensive evaluation of the characteristics of the Covid-119, on March 11, 2020, it was pronounced as a worldwide pandemic by the WHO. On 23rd March, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterress, called an instant worldwide ceasefire to "silence the guns" and "focus together on the true fight of our lives." The coronavirus ended up being an extraordinary public health and humanitarian emergency (Jabbar & Makki, 2021). A worldwide fear was created that hindered the progress of the quick reaction made to contain the virus. The pandemic is not just a danger to well-being but it has also caused extreme damage to most parts of society, including security, economics, education, transport, and business, and so forth (Bricknell, 2020). The quick spread of COVID-19 and measures to contain the infection have arguably drawn equals with earlier epidemics/pandemics, specifically the 2014s Ebola virus in West Africa and the 2003 flare-up of SARS, which also first appeared in China yet Hong Kong was affected badly. Although the SARS epidemic generally went unrecognized (officially) by the Security Council, in 2014 the UNSC labeled the Ebola epidemic in West Africa as a danger to global peace and security.

4.1.1. Covid-19: A threat to International Peace and Security

It is worth noting that the former UNSG Kofi Annan highlighted the rise and spread of infectious illnesses as risks to international peace and security in his 2005 report *In Larger Freedom*. He mentioned that:

> *...threats to peace and security in the twenty-first century include not just international war and conflict but civil violence, organized crime, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. They also include poverty, deadly infectious disease, and environmental degradation since these can have equally catastrophic consequences.*

The UNSC has already acknowledged that a health emergency can jeopardize global peace and security, particularly through its auxiliary consequences. To define the outbreak as a security problem and treat it as such, the UN Security Council has tried to do so in several ways.

4.1.2. The call for a global ceasefire

Announcing a worldwide ceasefire, Guterres described the virus as one that "attacks everyone, relentlessly," with certain communities at the greatest danger of "devastating losses." He cautioned that the global attention and resources might get sidetracked from resolving current conflicts and promoting peace processes, due to the Covid-19 crisis, when he launched the global humanitarian response plan on March 25.

Resolution 2439 on Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) expressed "serious concern about the security situation in the areas affected by the Ebola outbreak, which is severely hampering response efforts and facilitating the spread of the virus in the DRC and the wider region," and demanded an "immediate cessation of hostilities by all armed groups, including the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)."

In the past, the Council has called for country-specific ceasefires in the event of significant health emergencies, but this is the first time that UNSC has requested an International ceasefire in case of a global health crisis. Resolution 2532 on Covid-19 called upon all parties to armed conflicts to apply an "immediate cessation of hostilities" and to participate in "a durable humanitarian pause … in order to enable the safe, unhindered and sustainable delivery of humanitarian assistance, provisions of related services by impartial humanitarian actors … and medical evacuations." The UNSC also recognizes it that the

pandemics thrive in the war zones. The UNSCR 2532 also notes that "the conditions of violence and instability in conflict situations can exacerbate the pandemic.

4.1.3. Recognition of the catastrophic impact of Covid-19 and the pandemic causing or aggravating instability

Apart from seeing the conflict as a factor in intensifying pandemics, the UNSC has acknowledged that opposite also stands true: The pandemic has the potential to increase volatility. The Security Council Resolution 2532 adopted in July 2020 on the Covid-19 pandemic verifies that the exceptional degree of this outbreak comprises a risk to global peace and security. It opens by assuming that the peace-building and progress achievements gained by states undergoing a major transition, and post-war nations, might be reversed due to the blowout due to Covid-19 as well as that the pandemic is undermining the stability of those nations.

4.1.4. Call for Global Response Coordination and Humanitarian Response

Another concern about the worldwide reaction to coronavirus is the limited coordination in the policy making. There have been a few calls for improved global mobilizations to handle the emergency. On 26 March, while speaking to G20 Summit on the Covid-19, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom argued in favor of a "paradigm shift in global solidarity—in sharing experience, expertise, and resources and working together to keep supply lines open, supporting nations who need our support."

Relying on the standards of UNSC resolutions on HIV and Ebola, the UNSCR 2532 emphasized the necessity of more significant public, regional, and worldwide collaboration and solidarity and an organized, comprehensive, complete, and worldwide reaction with the United Nations assuming the vital coordinating role. The UNSCR 2532 reaffirmed the significance of an organized global reaction to the virus. The present outbreak differs from prior health crises in that it has spread so fast throughout the world, so organized global responses rooted in mutual cooperation are essential. It is also partly because much concerning the pathogen was either not known or unverified i.e. the critical data and information such as the incubation period, rate of spread, medium of spread etc., especially in the first six months.

The pandemic's effects particularly hard-hit people in refugee and IDP camps since they were already in a vulnerable position due to the violence. Therefore, the resolution praised

national and international health and humanitarian assistance workers for continuing to contribute and pledged to respond quickly to the COVID-19 outbreak everywhere around the globe.

Besides, among the other most exposed groups during the conflict, the impact of the pandemic on the migrants and IDP camps was more serious. Hence the resolution also praised the sustained involvement and responsibility of public and global health and humanitarian relief workers for their quick response to the COVID-19 pandemic everywhere around the globe.

4.1.5. UN Peace Operations and fight against terrorist groups

The existing pandemic has altogether affected the UN peacekeeping maneuvers and might sabotage the capacity of the UNPKOs (UN Peace Keeping Operations) to work according to the directives. Missions had to stall and adjust their tasks to assist in preventing the spread of the coronavirus. To help limit the spread of the coronavirus, missions had to pause and modify their activities. Peacekeepers reaching up in the field have been isolated, and troop replacements were postponed. In a letter dated April 4 to military and police-contributing governments, the UNSG highlighted the significance of field operations in assisting in the protection of vulnerable people. In addition, he stated that he instructed that all uniformed personnel replacements, returns, and new postings should be halted until June 30 as a precaution against the spread of Covid-19. Peacekeeping operations were also directed to cooperate and coordinate with national Covid-19 responses. Patrols were asked to enforce social distancing measures per the WHO guidelines.

In central and north Darfur, the UN/AU Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) launched a public awareness campaign to help internally displaced people living in camps prepare for and combat coronavirus. The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has been broadcasting the potential consequences of the Covid-19 on South Sudan and making public announcements to educate listeners about preventative actions against the pandemic through its Miraya Radio station. To deal with the situation, the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) also supplied some clinical equipment to hospitals in southern Lebanon.

The UNSCR 2532 places a special emphasis on the impact of COVID-19 on the ability of PKOs and Special Political Missions to carry out the critical duties assigned to them. It emphasizes that peacekeeping missions may assist host countries in their efforts to restrict the

virus' spread, particularly in terms of working with humanitarian access, including internally displaced persons and migrant camps, and considering medical withdrawals. The report then calls on the Secretary-General and the Member States to devise all feasible means of ensuring the well-being, security, and health of all UN faculty serving in UN peacekeeping operations while maintaining operational continuity, as well as to make further progress in arranging training for peacekeeping personnel on issues related to COVID-19 prevention.

Military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh), Al-Qaida and Al-Nusra Front, and all other individuals, groups, undertakings, and entities associated with Al-Qaida or ISIL, as well as other Council-designated terrorist groups, were exempted from the immediate cessation of hostilities and humanitarian pause imposed by UNSCR 2532.

4.1.6. Role of Women

The UNSCR 2532 also recognizes that a pandemic affects people in different ways, such as the uneven adverse effect of the pandemic, particularly the socio-economic impact, on women and girls, children, migrants, IDPs, the elderly, and people with disabilities, and calls for significant action to limit this effect and ensure the complete, equal, and significant contribution of females. It praised women's contributions to the coronavirus response.

4.2.   Identifying security grammar at the UNSC session

This part provides a multi-leveled assessment of the identified material to answer the research questions, as indicated in the methodological portion of the introduction chapter. The speech acts delivered at the UNSC session titled "Maintenance of international peace and security: Implications of COVID-19" have been examined. The discourses used by the speakers in front of the UN in terms of the linguistic construction of securitizing discourses and their social contextualization. Therefore in this section, the utterances of various actors will be examined in light of their place within the global governance system.

4.2.1. A grammar of security: the UN/Global level

As previously said, the UNSG, Mr. Antonio Guterres, and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Peter Maurer, are the actors whose speeches are examined, demonstrating the level of global governance. Both of these players highlighted

the pandemic's unique challenge, the severity of the outbreak, and the necessity for an immediate and exceptional reaction from the whole global community.

The UNSG gets directly to the point in his briefing to the UNSC on the Covid-19 outbreak: "The coronavirus illness (COVID-19) pandemic continues to severely undermine peace and security throughout the globe." He backs up his assertion by describing the nature of the epidemic and how it is impacting both "traditionally stable" nations and those that are in the midst of or recovering from conflict. He uses parallelism in his sentence construction that indicates an intensification in scale, with the highlight on the last-mentioned, i.e., the International community, thereby bringing attention to the disease's international consequences. Although it was not the UNSG's first address related to the pandemic, he did try to attract worldwide attention and support concerning Covid-19 response that might explain the increased emphasis on the possible international ramifications. Mr. Antonio Guterres is particularly concerned about growing tensions as a result of severe socioeconomic consequences. He is concerned about the "potential for unrest and violence" that may result from increasing complaints and decreased faith in public institutions due to the poor management of the Covid-19 issue. He also expresses his worry that the epidemic is causing or worsening human rights issues, as well as an increase in "humanitarian needs." Maurer also believes that the 'pandemic cannot be treated just as a health problem.' He, like the UNSG, places a special emphasis on populations living in war zones, referring to them as the "sharp edge" of pandemics. This, once again, draws attention to the ramifications of the Covid-19 epidemic beyond the immediate threat to human security.

It is evident throughout the speeches that both actors are portraying the outbreak as a frightening existential concern. The UNSG is extremely precise about the virus's dangerous character, referring to it as "the most urgent health and humanitarian catastrophe," implying that the issue is widely perceived as threatening as an enabling prerequisite for effective securitization (Buzan et al. 1998). The absence of passive voice becomes apparent when studying the transitivity of the verbs in the various utterances.

The coronavirus, in particular, appears to be active as it gets personified and emerges as an aggressive, destructive force. The UNSG, in particular, portrays the virus as a "protection catastrophe" that affects everyone. Every group has been attacked by the virus, from refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), particularly those living in restricted and congested camps and detention facilities, to health care and humanitarian professionals. The UNSG and

the President of the ICRC both refer to the worldwide public as their 'referent object' for effective securitization in one way or another. In his address, Antonio Guterres also discusses the notion of "common security and shared well-being." "Assistance and protection must be provided to all people in need without fear of politicization or manipulation," says the president of the ICRC, reaffirming the international community as the referent object of security.

All players create a framework of no return, in which inaction and a delay of a speedy upgrading of international reaction would bear disastrous global repercussions. At the UNSC meeting, both the UNSG and the head of the ICRC claimed that delays are unaffordable and that the cost of inactivity at the global level would be significant.

The obligation for affirmative action is clearly articulated in the speeches in the international community, i.e. all nations around the world. On one hand as Maurer is optimistic that a collaborative effort may contain the epidemic, on the other he also notes that "responses will be effective only if there is community trust and engagement." "Our job is to save lives now while strengthening the pillars of security for tomorrow," Guterres adds. The international community's support and all those in a position to help are believed to be critical to the efficacy of the UN's current efforts (UNSCR, 2532).

The Covid-19 reaction must go beyond the health sector to address the pandemic's broader secondary effects. "Pandemic reactions cannot be limited to mask distribution or confinement to emergency rooms. Communities require safeguards to protect themselves against the many elements of fragility, such as health and sanitation systems, social safety nets, and livelihoods", according to Maurer.

The securitizing actors, in this case, Guterres and Maurer, both mention the measures that have already been taken, such as the adoption of UNSCR 2532, as well as the adoption of draught resolution A/74/L.92 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) under the agenda item "Comprehensive and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic," the UNSG call for a global ceasefire, and the financial assistance. "Humanitarian law must be better respected to safeguard citizens and infrastructure from numerous potential shocks, including pandemics," warns Maurer.

Considering the results mentioned above, the framework for this study indicates that these two actors have produced knowledge claims regarding Covid-19 as a terrifying threat with "major political, social, economic, humanitarian, and security aspects," in addition to

taking many lives. Even when it comes to attaching liability to deal with the detected threat and (exceptional) steps to address it, the grammar of security in the language used at this level is maintained.

4.2.2. A grammar of security: the influential donor countries

The speeches evaluated representing the contributing nations came from the United States, the United Kingdom, China, and Germany, as described in the methodology section. All four nations were not only actively participating in response to Covid-19 at the time of their remarks, but they also stressed the importance of a refurbished and more coherent international response. The missions and delegates of these countries to the UN hold an authoritative position acknowledged by their respective countries as well as the UN audience as they are selected delegates or the national leaders. While making knowledge claims to emphasize on the necessary haste for a joint effort to stall the spread of Covid-19, they all exhibit a high affinity with their assertions, as an accurate description of reality is presented. The speeches delivered by the Chinese and American delegates are accorded greater weight for two reasons. First, because these two nations are probably the world's two most influential countries, and second, because the outbreak began in the Chinese province of Wuhan, the Trump administration has accused the Chinese government of concealing the disease's scope and lack of openness. This has strained an already tense relationship between the two nations. These two nations have also been at the forefront of the worldwide pandemic response.

Donald Trump, the president of the US, has described himself as a wartime president whose adversary is invisible and attacks everything and everyone. Kelly Craft, the former permanent representative of the US to the UN, gave a speech that echoed President Trump's and other members of his administration's comments. The representative of the US made significant contributions in order to securitize Covid-19, as evidenced by Ms. Kelly Craft's comments at the UNSC session in her position as the US representative and much more so in President Trump's speeches. Without delving into the President's speeches, which are outside the scope of this research, it can be claimed that he used securitizing discourses by referring to the state of affairs as a "global threat," a "medical war," and himself as the "wartime president." Given that discourse creation builds on earlier rhetoric (Fairclough, 2010), it is no surprise that these phrases eventually appear in the statements of the official US representatives as well as in the speeches of actors and agencies.

Craft, in her capacity as the spokesperson for the US, follows up on the repeated theme of the Covid-19 pandemic being an unusual situation. She emphasizes the need to take time to think and share what we have learned from the "ongoing threat that health emergencies pose to international security," as well as how we can fulfill our duties to safeguard the world's most vulnerable people. She repeats President Trump's prior remarks and emphasizes the "unquestionable need for total transparency and timely sharing of public-health data and information with the international community." Both she and Trump present a bleak image of what is happening in the worst-affected countries by the disease, emphasizing that Covid-19 is a threat. They stress the importance of working together. She presses 'all the appropriate buttons' to persuade her audience of the truth behind the situation she depicts, as well as the pressing necessity for them to act fast and advance the global security agenda. "The international community must stay equally dedicated to preserving our responses to continuing humanitarian disasters," she says. She also notes the pandemic's disproportionate impact on women and girls. To be more explicit, she repeatedly employs contractions like "don't," "we'll," "that's," and "there's," giving the entire speech an informal tone while communicating a serious and urgent message. This is highly effective because it makes the issue more visible and concrete in a realm of diplomacy that is usually abstract. She emphasized the Trump administration's efforts in the "global fight against the Covid-19."

The other donor nations, including the United States, recognize the necessity for an immediate reaction and value the UN meetings' convening. Mr. Zhang Jun, speaking on behalf of China, which had a SARS epidemic in 2003, offers his sympathy to those who are afflicted with the sickness and discusses the effects of globalization. Jun believes that the crisis has severely damaged the economic progress as well as social stability of the countries it has hit the hardest, therefore it has proved to be a threat to International peace and stability. Like the other participants of the UNSC meeting, he highlighted the necessity of comprehensive global pandemic response, saying, "...solidarity and cooperation is the most important weapon in fighting the pandemic." He also requested that the UN Security Council investigate methods to essentially remove unilateral coercive measures like economic sanctions so that innocent civilians are not harmed. Repeating what the other participants of the UNSC meeting said, he confirms that the referent aim of this securitizing move is the international community. Heiko Maas, Germany's Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, has described the epidemic as "the biggest crisis since 1945." Maas says that "a virus can be deadlier than a gun" and that early "preventive action" based on good reporting is what "maintaining peace and security means in

the twenty-first century." He also emphasizes the importance of an "international solution" to a "global crisis." Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, the UK Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN, similarly stated that "the development objective and sustainable peace and security cannot be solved as separate issues, and they cannot be solved alone."

As discussed in the preceding section, the delegates of all the four nations outline the future course of action to address the crisis while assigning charge to the international community. However, their justifications for the cooperation and helping one another, differ. As the two most powerful nations in the international arena, the United States and China emphasize "how we can fulfill our duties to safeguard the most vulnerable populations" (Craft, 2020), "we must put people and their lives first" (Jun, 2020). While using humanitarian rhetoric to allude to the unacceptably high levels of suffering that exist across the world, Germany and the United Kingdom construct the fear of the pandemic explicitly. Their focus was on the repercussions in case of failure of a timely and appropriate response. Heiko Maas, for example, observes that "...with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has clearly embarked on an unstable new phase. For the first time in living memory, humanity is confronting a common threat that it must defeat collectively."

When describing the specific (exceptional) steps needed to combat the epidemic, all nations highlight the contributions they have already made and/or refer to additional activities they have committed to taking. They all recognize the leadership role of the UN, particularly in light of the adoption of UNSCR 2532. Extraordinary measures, such as budgetary changes for increased resource allocation or military engagement in limiting the epidemic, have been used in the speeches of the four nations, indicating the audience's approval of the security narrative. As a result, Covid-19 is not only viewed as a current threat to countries and the globe but also as an issue that requires long-term attention in order to reduce the risk of future breakouts becoming similar concerns. Furthermore, a security vocabulary was definitely established on this level, in line with the securitization theory. The three facilitating conditions for a successful securitization were fulfilled (Buzan et al., 1998).

4.2.3. A grammar of security: the worst affected countries

Securitizing rhetoric is readily discernible in statements given on behalf of the two most impacted nations, Italy and Iran. As the sickness gets personified in the various comments, there is evidence of creating an enemy image and a military discourse around Covid-19. Covid-

19 is a disease with a high mortality rate and "security implications," warn both the representatives. While drawing a parallel between the war and the effects of the coronavirus epidemic, Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Majid Takht Ravanchi, predicts that "the death toll from the virus could exceed the combined toll of war, disease, and hunger over the last five years." He further points out that unilateral sanctions are cruel and unjust in other contexts, but that in the case of the "current unprecedented global health crisis," it is against humanity's best interests since only a well-coordinated international response can "combat the disease." On March 9, Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte referred to the Second World War when he quoted Winston Churchill to describe Italy's "darkest hour," and Italy's special commissioner for COVID-19 employed the notion of a war economy in this context (Lowen, 2020).

Covid-19 is described by Italy's permanent representative to the UN Security Council as a "global health emergency" that requires coordinated and multilateral action. While relating the pandemic to security, the Italian delegation to the UNSC states, "The pandemic has seriously exacerbated ongoing threats to the maintenance of international peace and security." It is worth noting that, once again, both countries position the referent object of the threat at the international community. Many references may be found in the speeches regarding the point of no return that securitization theory emphasizes. Conte, for example, termed Covid-19 "the most difficult crisis" since WWII on March 21.

Furthermore, he referred to those days as "challenging" and used the expression "We do not have choices" to defend the "severe measures" taken by his government in order to deal with the coronavirus crisis. He asked his people to make a "sacrifice" of staying at home (Sodano, 2020). As a result, it was reiterated by him that the crisis is not someone else's or a government's problem, rather it is a concern for everyone. Furthermore, he added that there is no alternative way out of the crisis; therefore, all actions should be accepted.

4.3. Trilogy of the Covid-19 Securitization: Securitizing actors, Securitizing move and the referent object

The research has provided insight into the construction of Covid-19 as a discursive threat on behalf of all of the people involved. The study also turned up several other interesting findings. Although Covid-19 is depicted as a menace at all the above-discussed levels, the referent object remains constant. At all three levels, the International community, particularly

vulnerable groups such as IDPs, refugees, women, children, and people residing in conflict-prone zones, are considered the referent object of security.

All the actors present at the time of adoption of UNSCR 2532 on 1st July 2020 and the next day UNSC open session titled "Maintenance of international peace and security: Implications of COVID-19" on 2nd July 2020, may be considered as the securitizing actors. The speeches made at the UNSC meeting and the events leading to it can be considered as the securitizing moves. However, the most significant securitizing move was the adoption of UNSCR 2532. It is pretty significant to notice that unlike the securitization of Ebola and HIV/AIDS, the securitization of Covid-19 is based in the human security domain.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The goal of this study was to discover the techniques that were used to securitize Covid-19. A number of queries were presented to organize the study and operationalize the research topic to answer the research questions. To what extent do the players engaged in response propagation use a security grammar? What are the distinguishing elements of the threat construction, and who is the referent object if a security grammar can be identified? What are these players' recommendations for coping with the Covid-19 outbreak?

This section explains the findings and demonstrates how the goal was met. The results of the study will then be addressed considering their significance for different fields surrounding the research. It also covers the comparison of this research to the previously conducted studies. After that, the study will be assessed regarding the theoretical and methodological decisions made and how they influenced the study's conclusion. The chapter closes by proposing future research topics that might address the study's flaws and accomplishments while also filling in the gap.

5.1.   Answering the research questions

The study throws light on the securitizing discourses that have been used at various levels of the international system. All international agents have obviously used securitizing rhetoric, as has become apparent. These speeches were delivered by actors who were acknowledged by the UN audience as having considerable authority. Knowledge claims were used to securitize the situation, and the global community was given responsibility for a response. Covid-19 was labeled as an existential threat to the International community while outlining potentially global consequences. Therefore, the International community remain the referent object of this securitization process. A point of no return was illustrated by, e.g., "the death toll from the virus could exceed the combined toll of war, disease, and hunger over the last five years" and an early 'preventive action' based on good reporting is what "maintaining peace and security means in the 21st century."

The exceptional steps indicated by the different players, whether ongoing or intended, demonstrate that they had previously been approved by the appropriate audience and had resulted in policy changes, most notably the passage of relevant resolutions. A handful of intriguing topics may be addressed in terms of how this study relates to past studies. First, the analysis has shown that the statement that viruses may be regarded as security risks if they are

seen to constitute a threat to society's survival and/or stability, or if extraordinary actions are necessary to cope with them, (Selgelid & Enemark, 2008) is valid for Covid-19.

Additionally, evidence of today's global connectivity may be seen in the numerous mentions of the transnational understanding of the alleged threat posed by Covid-19, particularly concerning the worldwide ramifications of the outbreak's economic consequences. Due to growing globalization, the Chinese special mission to the UN discussed the idea of "shared destiny."

5.2. Future Research

The strength of this thesis stems from the close relationship that existed between the methodological approach and the theoretical framework, as one complemented the other. As a result, the study offered a detailed account of the discursive processes surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic in question as well as demonstrated the theoretical notion. Furthermore, because this research is centered on a current and hitherto untapped case study, it has the potential to broaden the discipline of global health security. Regarding PCS, the information gathered throughout the course of this study might serve as a springboard for additional research into the impacts of a securitizing discourse on the people who are affected.

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